

Force Provider (FP) Expeditionary Base Camps

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Originally intended as rest and refit base camps for Soldiers returning from combat operations, FP Expeditionary Base Camps have evolved into a force multiplier for combatant commanders. The FP modules provide all the hygiene, billeting, laundry, and field feeding facilities for up to 600 personnel, serving as a big boost to morale for Soldiers. They have affectionately become the Army’s home away from home.

An FP 600-person revision B configuration is deployed in the Afghanistan theater. (U.S. Army photo.)



Expeditionary Modules

Some key features that make recent revisions of FP modules expeditionary are that each 600-person module can be divided into four equal sub-modules; the use of an air-beam-supported Tent, Extendable, Modular Personnel (TEMPER) shelter; and triple container (TRICON)-based hygiene, laundry, and feeding systems. The four equal sub-modules enable the commander to deploy 150 personnel to four separate locations without sacrificing capabilities, enabling greater flexibility in deciding where to base combat power.

The air-beam TEMPER shelters make setting up the billeting and administrative tents a snap, reducing the time it takes to establish an entire 600-person camp from what used to take weeks to just a few days. The tent's air-beams are inflated with an air compressor, which is similar to filling an automobile tire with air, taking less than 30 minutes to set up each tent. With the flooring and liner already integrated into the tent, the only thing left to do is hang lighting on pre-positioned straps, and the shelters are ready to be occupied.

The TRICON systems are shipped in their transportation configuration (8 feet by 8 feet by 6 ½ feet) and can be easily and quickly expanded into their operational footprint of a standard 20-foot International Organization for Standardization (ISO) container. When combined, these key features are quite impressive, boasting the ability to air transport all necessary equipment for a complete 150-person camp in a single C-17 aircraft. After reaching its final destination, the sub-module can be fully operational in less than 4 hours with a trained crew of eight personnel, providing quality latrine, shower, laundry, billeting, and feeding facilities for warfighters.

The FP program is managed out of the Army's Product Manager Force Sustainment Systems (PM FSS) office at the Natick Soldier Systems Center, Natick, MA. PM FSS has life-cycle management responsibility for products

ranging from cargo aerial delivery equipment, to shelters and heaters, to field feeding and field services systems. PM FSS falls under the Project Manager Force Projection Office, which is part of the Program Executive Office Combat Support and Combat Service Support's (PEO CS&CSS') portfolio. PEO CS&CSS and Project Manager Force Projection are collocated in Warren, MI.

FP Improvements

Even though FP has been touted as the Army's premier base camp, PM FSS continually seeks ways to increase capabilities while improving the living conditions for deployed Soldiers. A recent technological improvement that will be integrated into future FP modules is the addition of a Shower Water Reuse System (SWRS) capability. Similar to the technology used for the Army's Tactical Water Purification Unit, the SWRS makes up to 75 percent of the shower water used in a camp available for reuse. This will significantly reduce the logistics burden for FP base camps, considering that up to 20,000 gallons of water are used in daily camp operations to support 600 personnel.

Future improvements for FP modules include a Modular Ballistic Protection System (MBPS) and a waste remediation system. The MBPS is designed to provide the same protection achieved with the standard issue Kevlar helmet but applied to shelters and container systems. To provide protection for shelter inhabitants, MBPS panels are employed in a traditional TEMPER frame-supported tent, hung on the inside of the fabric, or as a standoff system supported by a separate structure. The panels can also be attached to the outside of standard ISO containers. A waste remediation system is undergoing a Foreign Comparative Test to determine if the technology is suitable for the Army's use. If the foreign technology proves to be a good fit, the system will further minimize the logistics burden on the base camp by reducing waste by up to 90 percent. An additional benefit is the



Older and new FP configurations sit in the Afghanistan theater. (U.S. Army photo.)

decrease or possible elimination of potential force protection concerns whereby contracted personnel have to enter the camp perimeter to haul refuse away.

Other future improvements, though relatively early in their development cycle, will incorporate the latest technologies while considering the logistical burden placed on supporting camps. More efficient equipment and the more effective use of power generation will further ease the burden on resupplying fuel to base camps. Harnessing alternate sources of energy coupled with energy-efficient structures, such as shelters with increased insulation properties, will also mitigate the need for refueling base camps. All future efforts are aimed to reduce the two major resupply commodities of fuel and water while at the same time increasing capabilities for our Soldiers.

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